

Galveston Bay Foundation Celebrates 500th project

On June 3rd, the Galveston Bay Foundation celebrated Marsh Mania 2006 at Pierce Marsh in Hitchcock, TX. The event also marked the 500th project by Restore America's Estuaries, a long-time partner of NOAA and the Foundation. After constructing terraces, participants planted smooth tide grass in the marsh; these efforts have restored over 1,450 acres of salt marsh habitat and serve as protection for an additional 2,000 acres of various coastal and estuarine habitat types.

Restoration Center staff were joined by Bob Stokes, president of the Galveston Bay Foundation; Larry Soward, commissioner of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality; and Mark Wolf-Armstrong, president of Restore America's Estuaries.

The NOAA Restoration Center has committed over \$300,000 to the Galveston Bay Foundation's annual Marsh Mania events from 1999 to 2006, engaging more than 4,000 volunteers in 15,000 hours of service. Marsh Mania has benefited over 20 sites around Galveston Bay, with an additional \$800,000 in federal funding to these sites through NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program.

Marsh Mania was established to address the loss of over 30,000 acres of wetlands in and around Galveston Bay since the 1950s. Restore America's Estuaries aims to restore one million acres of estuarine habitat by 2010 by encouraging public stewardship and participation in restoration efforts.

At Pierce Marsh, volunteers planted smooth tide grass to prevent erosion and restore the natural marsh habitat. (Photo credit: Timothy Love and Bob Stokes)



As of 2006, Marsh Mania efforts have restored over 1,450 acres of salt marsh habitat. (Photo credit: Bob Stokes)

Volunteers at the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge enjoyed doing their part to restore the marsh by planting grasses and other natural vegetation. (Photo credit: Stephanie Martinez)



Pierce Marsh volunteers pose after a long day of work; more than 4,000 volunteers have participated in Marsh Mania events since 1999. (Photo credit: Timothy Love and Bob Stokes)